Decline in Agriculture Production

1539. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether South West Monsoon being erratic this year, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu suffered severe rain deficiency;

(b) whether it is true that agriculture production projected has declined by 1.5 per cent as against 1.3 per cent growth projected earlier for this year; and

(c) whether the Ministry of Agriculture works out any alternatives to offset drip agriculture land affected by erratic rainfall with assured irrigation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), the overall rainfall during South West Monsoon was normal-with country receiving 96% of long period average rainfall. However, due to uneven temporal and spatial distribution of rainfall, 7 out of 35 meteorological sub-divisions received deficient rainfall which included Tamil Nadu & Pondicherry and Saurashtra region of Gujarat State.

(b) Inspite of erratic rainfall, the current year's kharif agricultural production, barring kharif oilseeds, is more or less at par with the corresponding production last year. However, this is lower than the targets, except than that of sugarcane. The likely agricultural production for the current and last year kharif season and the corresponding targets for the current year are given in the table below:

(Production in Million Tonnes)

	Target For 1999	Likely Production 1999	1998
Kharif Foodgrain	107.60	102.70	102.68
Kharif Oilseeds	16.50	12.00	16.17
Cotton*	15.00	12.52	12.18
Jute & Mesta**	11.00	9.42	9.70
Sugarcane	305.00	304.95	295.70

*Million bales of 170 kg. each "Million bales of 180 kg. each

(c) The Govemment accords high priority to the holisitc and integrated development of rainfed areas involving the concepts of development of potential watersheds and sustainable farming system development. With this objective a centrally sponsored scheme, namely the National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA) is being implemented in 25 States and 2 Union Territories for the benefit of farmers in rainfed areas. The objectives are achieved under the scheme through treating both arable and non-arable lands and natural drainage lines in the rainfed areas for in-situ moisture conservation associated with diversified farming system approach for improving production and productivity. The project has holistic approach and addresses the ecological and productivity concerns and aims at harmonizing ecology, economy and equity.

Besides, funds for drip sprinkler irrigation systems are also provided under various centrally sponsored schemes for the development of horticulture and other crop production.

Five Point Programme for Agriculture Production

1540. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated a five point programme to the related activities to give impetus in agricultural production in the country; and

(b) if so, to what extent it has been implemented in Himachal Pradesh, district-wise and what is its result?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) The Prime Minister, while inaugurating the 'Agro Advantage Maharashtra Conference' at Mumbai on November 6, 1998, announced a Five Point Programme focussing on effective functioning of Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium, strengthening the futures, market in the agriculture sector, promotion of exports of farm produce, unveiling a National Rural Cooperative PoUcy and use of information technology in agriculture and agro-business, to give a major boost to food processing and agro-based businesses in the country. The focus of the Programme is on measures to be taken at the National level.